

THIRD BOOK
OF THE
HISTORY OF LA FLORIDA,
BY THE INCA

It tells of the departure of the Spaniards from Apalache; the good reception they gave them in four provinces; the hunger they suffered in some uninhabited regions; the infinite number of pearls and the other grandeur and riches that they found in a temple; the generosity of the Lady of Cofachiqui and of other Caciques, lords of vassals; a very bloody battle the Indians gave them after promising friendship; a mutiny certain Castilians attempted; the laws of the Indians against adulteresses; and another very fierce battle that took place at night. It contains thirty-nine chapters.

THE GOVERNOR LEAVES APALACHE, AND A BATTLE TAKES PLACE WITH SEVEN ON EACH SIDE

The governor and adelantado Hernando de Soto, having dispatched Captain Diego Maldonado, who went to La Havana for the purposes told above, and having ordered the provisions and other things necessary, prepared for leaving Apalache. The time now having come, he took his army from that camp at the end of March of the year 1540. He traveled three days' journey toward the north through the same province without meeting enemies who gave him trouble, though those of that country were very vexatious and warlike. On the last of the three days the Castilians lodged in a small pueblo, which was made into a peninsula by being almost entirely surrounded by a swamp more than a hundred paces wide, and having a great deal of mud, which came halfway up the thigh. They had wooden bridges at intervals by which one could leave the place in any direction. The pueblo was situated on a high point from which a large extent of country was visible, and many other small pueblos were seen, scattered about a beautiful valley. The army remained three days in this pueblo, which was the principal one of those in that valley, all of them being in the province of Apalache. On the second day it happened that there went out of the camp at noon five halberdiers of the general's guard and two other soldiers, natives of Badajoz. One of these was named Francisco de Aguilera and the other Andrés Moreno, whom they also called Angel Moreno because, being a merry and lively man, he was always putting into all his speech, without rhyme or reason, this word: "angels, angels."

These seven Spaniards left the principal pueblo without orders from the officials of our army, simply for recreation and to see what was in the other little pueblos. The five men of the guard carried their halberds. Andrés Moreno wore his sword and carried a lance in his hands, and Francisco de Aguilera had a sword and shield. They left the pueblo with these arms, not recalling the great vigilance and care that the Indians of that province always exercised in killing those who strayed away. They passed the swamp and a fringe of woods that was not more than twenty paces across. On the other side was open country with many maize fields.

These seven Spaniards had gone scarcely two hundred paces from the camp when the Indians fell upon them, for as we have seen they never ceased

their stratagems against those who strayed. At the shout and outcry both sides gave while fighting, giving the alarm and asking for help, many Spaniards came out from the pueblo to defend their men and, so as not to lose time in searching for a crossing of the swamp, they passed over it at the nearest point, in water and mud waist- and breast-deep. But for all the haste they made they found the five halberdiers dead, each with his body pierced with ten or twelve arrows, and Andrés Moreno alive but with a barbed flint arrow, besides others in his body, that passed through him from breast to shoulders, and as soon as they took it out to treat him he died. Francisco de Aguilar, who was a stronger and more robust man than the others, and being such had defended himself better than the rest, was still alive though he had two arrow wounds, which passed through both thighs, and many blows over the head and the whole body, which they had given him with bows, because when he closed with the Indians they had used all their arrows, and seeing him alone, they grasped their bows with both hands and gave him such hard blows that they knocked his shield to pieces, only the handles being left. They gave him a glancing blow on the forehead that took off all the skin down to the eyebrows and left the skull exposed.

The seven Spaniards were left in this state and the Indians had taken cover before help arrived, because they had heard them coming. The Christians were unable to see the number of the enemy, and Francisco de Aguilar told them that they were more than fifty, and that because there were so many against so few, they had killed them so quickly. But afterward, from day to day, he continued to reveal things favorable to the Indians that had taken place in the fight, and more than twenty days after it, he being newly recovered from his wounds though still weak and convalescent, when other soldiers were joking with him about the blows that the Indians had given him and asking if he had counted them, if they hurt him much, if he would try to avenge them, if he thought he would challenge the enemy on condition that they come out one at a time so that they would not have the advantage of numbers over one man, and other such facetious things that soldiers are accustomed to joke about among themselves, Francisco de Aguilar replied, saying: "I didn't count the blows because they gave me no chance, nor were they delivered so slowly that they could be counted. Whether they hurt me a lot or a little you will know when they give you some like them, and that day will come, I promise you. Because we are speaking frankly and so that you can see what the Indians of this province are like, I wish to tell you seriously, without suppressing or adding anything to the facts (though what I shall say

will be against myself), of a courtesy and bravery of spirit that they showed to me that day.

"You must know, then, that, as I told you at the time, more than fifty Indians came out to watch us, but as soon as they saw us and realized that we were only seven and that no horses were coming to support us, another seven Indians separated themselves from the squadron that they had formed, and the rest withdrew to a distance and did not attempt to fight. Only the seven attacked us, and as we did not carry crossbows or harquebuses with which we could hold them off, and as they were lighter and swifter than we, they walked in front of us, leaping about and making fun of us and shooting arrows at their pleasure as if we were captive wild beasts, without our being able to wound them. They killed my companions in this manner, and seeing me alone, to prevent my escaping them all seven set upon me and, holding their bows with both hands, they put me in the state in which you found me. Since they spared my life I forgive them the blows and have no thought of challenging them, for [my wrongs] do not demand that I make use of a challenge so that they can again put me in the state in which they left me before. I have been silent about all this for the sake of my honor and have said nothing about it until now, but this is what really happened, and God keep you from wandering about, so that the same thing may not happen to you." The companions and friends of Francisco de Aguilar were amazed at hearing him because they had never imagined that the Indians were capable of such a chivalrous action as to desire to fight on equal terms with the Castilians when they could attack them with the advantage [of numbers]. But all the Indians of this great kingdom presume so much upon their spirit, strength, and swiftness that, on not seeing horses, they would not admit that the Spaniards had any advantage, but assumed rather that they themselves had it, especially when the Christians were going about as lacking in defensive arms as the Indians themselves.¹²

¹²In the other chronicles these events took place in the province of Capachequi. Garcilaso fails to mention the arduous crossing of the river of Capachequi. Swanton, *Final Report*, 166-67.

II

THE SPANIARDS REACH ALTAPAHA, AND THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY WERE ENTERTAINED

With this misfortune of the loss of the six Spaniards, the governor left the peninsular pueblo of the province of Apalache, and having marched two more days, making five in all that they traveled to get out of this province, they entered the territory of another called Altapaha.¹³ The adelantado desired to be the first to see it, in order to learn whether the natives of that province were as rough and warlike as those of Apalache, and also because it was a constantly observed custom of his that he must go himself to any new discovery of provinces because he was not satisfied with the reports of others, but wished to see with his own eyes. Therefore he chose forty cavalry and sixty infantry, [consisting of] twenty *rodeleros*, twenty *harquebusiers*, and twenty crossbowmen, for whenever they went on any expedition the infantry were always selected in this manner.

The governor marched with them for two days, and at dawn of the third day he entered the first pueblo of the province of Altapaha and found that the Indians had retired to the woods, taking their women, children, and possessions with them. The Castilians went through the whole pueblo and captured six Indians, two of whom were nobles and were captains who had remained in the pueblo to get the common people out of it. They took all six of them before the governor so that he might learn from them what was in the province.

Before the adelantado asked them a single question the principal Indians said: "What is it that you desire in our houses? Do you wish peace or war?" They said this without any sign that they felt uneasy at finding themselves captives in the hands of strangers; on the other hand they bore themselves in a lordly manner, as if they enjoyed full liberty and were talking with some of their Indian neighbors.

The general replied through his interpreter Juan Ortiz, saying that he desired war with no one, but peace and friendship with all; that they were going in search of certain provinces that were beyond and that they were in need of provisions for their march, because they must eat, and they would

¹³The events described by Garcilaso as taking place in the province of Altapaha actually refer to Ichisi. Altapaha, evidently the namesake of Altamaha, is yet another instance among many wherein Garcilaso confuses and transposes place-names.

make this exaction and no other on the road. This was what they desired, and nothing else.

The principal Indians said: "Well, it was not necessary for you to capture us for this purpose; we will give you here all the supplies that you need for your journey, and we will treat you better than they treated you in Apalache, for we know very well how you fared there." So saying, they ordered two of the four Indians who had been captured with them to go as quickly as possible to give the news to their curaca and principal lord, and tell him what they had seen and heard regarding the Castilians; on the road they were to notify all the Indians whom they should meet, telling them to pass the word along for all of them to come to serve the Christians who were in their country, because they were friends and did not come to harm them. On hearing the reasonable replies of the Indians, the governor, confiding in them and seeing that he could deal with them better by kindness than by force, ordered that they be released immediately and entertained and treated like friends.

The Indians left with the message, and the other four remained with the general. They asked if his lordship thought it well to go back to another better pueblo than the one where they were, saying that they would take him by an easier road than that by which he had come. The governor was glad to do what the Indians suggested because it would bring him nearer his army, and he ordered one of them to take word to the *maese de campo* to go directly to that pueblo and not go around by the route that he had come. When the Castilians arrived at the pueblo to which the Indians took them they were received with demonstrations of much affection, and as soon as he had news of the friendly compact made with the Spaniards the *cacique* came to kiss the governor's hands, and courteous and affable expressions were exchanged between the two. With the curaca came all his vassals and the women and children who had withdrawn to the fields, and they settled down in their pueblos.

Meanwhile the army arrived and encamped inside and outside of the pueblo. During all the time the Spaniards were in this province their relations with the Indians were entirely peaceful and friendly, which was no small satisfaction to our men after the many hostilities that those of Apalache had carried on against them.

After resting three days in the pueblo of Altapaha, the Castilians left it and marched for ten days along the bank of a river, upstream. They saw that that whole country appeared to be as fertile or more so than Apalache, and the people domestic and peaceful. They maintained the peace that they had made with them at the beginning in such a manner that the Indians received

no molestation unless it was in regard to the food that they consumed, and the Spaniards took this very sparingly in order not to make the natives uneasy. They found extremely large mulberry trees in this province of Altapaha, and though they had been in the others also, they were as nothing compared with these.

At the end of the ten days' journey that our men traveled due north up the river, they passed out of the province of Altapaha, leaving the curaca and his Indians very satisfied with the friendship that they had contracted with them. They entered another province, called Achalaque,¹⁴ which was poor and lacking in food. There were very few young Indians in it, almost all of its inhabitants being old; usually they were nearsighted, and many of them were blind. Inasmuch as the presence in a pueblo or a province of many old people is usually an indication that there will be many more young ones, the Spaniards wondered at not finding them in this country and even suspected that they might be in rebellion and concealed somewhere in order to perpetrate some mischief against the Christians; but on asking questions, they learned that there was nothing concealed, there was only what appeared in public. But they did not inquire into the reason why there were so many old people and so few young ones. The Spaniards traveled through this province of Achalaque making long daily marches, in order to leave it quickly both because it was poor in food and because they desired to reach that of Cofachiqui as soon as they could. There, because of the news that they had of there being much gold and silver in that province, they thought to load themselves down with rich treasure and return to Spain.

Whereupon they doubled their daily marches, and they could do it easily because the country was flat, without woods, mountains, or rivers to impede their swift pace. They crossed the province of Achalaque in five days' march and left its curaca and natives very peaceably inclined and friendly toward the Castilians. So that they would remember them, the governor

¹⁴In another possible instance of Garcilaso's tendency to transpose place-names, here he uses Achalaque for Altamaha. Achalaque is therefore duplicated, for it appears again as Chalalake in the territory beyond Cofitachequi. The name in the latter instance probably refers to speakers of the Cherokee language. It should be noted, however, that the name Chalalake (*Tsiloki* in the Muskogean language) merely means "people of different speech" and was commonly used at a later time by Muskogees to refer to people who spoke languages such as Hitchiti. John R. Swanton, "Social Organization and Social Usages of the Indians of the Creek Confederacy," in *Forty-second Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1928), 157.

gave them, among other presents, two swine, male and female, for breeding. He had done the same for the cacique of Altapaha and the lords of the other provinces who had come out peacefully and made friends with the Spaniards. Though hitherto we have not mentioned that the adelantado had taken these animals to La Florida, it is true that he took more than three hundred head, male and female, which multiplied greatly and were exceedingly useful in the great necessities that our Castilians suffered in this discovery. If the Indians (abhorring more the memory of those who brought these animals than esteeming their usefulness) have not destroyed them, it is probable that, in consideration of the advantages that great kingdom has for breeding them, there are many of them there today, for besides those the governor gave to the friendly curacas, many others were lost along the roads, though they were well and carefully guarded. While on the march one of the companies of cavalry was assigned especially to herd and guard them.

III

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF COFA AND ITS CACIQUE, AND A PIECE OF ARTILLERY THAT THEY LEFT IN HIS KEEPING

The adelantado was always accustomed whenever he left one province and went on to another to send messengers on ahead to notify the cacique of his coming. He did this on the one hand to request peace and allay the fear that they might feel at seeing strange people in their country, and on the other to find out from the reply that the Indians gave him their favorable or hostile attitude toward them. When the Indians did not dare go from one province to another because of the enmity that existed between them, or when an uninhabited region intervened, then the governor himself made the discovery, as we have seen above, in the best way that he could. Observing this procedure, then, before he left the province of Achalaque he sent messengers to the curaca of the other province, called Cofa, which bordered upon it, letting him understand that he was coming to his country to recognize him as a friend and to treat him as a brother, as he had done with all the other lords of vassals who had received him peaceably.

Besides this message he ordered the Indians who carried it to take care to

tell the cacique Cofa of the good treatment that the Spaniards had accorded to their curaca Achalaque and to all the natives of that province because they had received them in peace and had always maintained it.

The cacique Cofa and all his vassals showed much pleasure at the message, and thus with one accord and with much gladness and rejoicing they replied, saying that his lordship and all his army were very welcome to their house and state, where they were waiting with great desire to see and know them in order to serve them to the best of their ability. Therefore they begged that they hasten their journey.

The general and all his soldiers were satisfied with this favorable reply and hastened their march. On the fourth day after they had left the province of Achalaque they arrived at the first pueblo of the province of Cofa, where the cacique was awaiting them with all the rest of the people whom he had summoned to show the grandeur of his court, and with the common people whom he had ordered to be assembled to serve the Spaniards. When he knew that the Castilians were approaching his pueblo he went a third of a league beyond it to receive them, and kissing the governor's hands, he repeated the same words that he had sent to say to him in his reply. The governor embraced him, showing him much affection, and thus the Spaniards entered the pueblo, both foot soldiers and cavalry formed in squadrons.

The curaca lodged the governor in his own house and quartered the army in the pueblo, he himself designating the sections and districts for this and that company, accommodating them all in their order as if he were the *maese de campo*, which pleased the officials of the army very much because he showed himself to be a military man. Having assigned the lodgings, the cacique went with the governor's permission to another pueblo that was about two *harquebus*-shots distant from the first one.

This province of Cofa is fertile and abounds in the food that land affords, and it has all the other advantages of woodlands and open plains that we have described in the rest of the country for raising [cattle] and cultivating the soil. It is inhabited by numerous and very good people, gentle and affable, and there the governor and his men were entertained and rested in the first pueblo for five days, because the curaca would not consent to their leaving sooner, and the general agreed, in order to show his friendship.

We have not mentioned hitherto a piece of artillery the governor brought along with his army, and the reason has been that no occasion has arisen throughout the expedition to speak of it, until now. Thus it is that the *adelantado*, having seen that it served for nothing except a burden and annoyance, requiring men to care for it and pack mules to transport it, decided to

leave it with the curaca Cofa to keep for him. So that he might see what he was leaving for him, the governor ordered the piece aimed from the house of the cacique himself at a large and very beautiful live-oak tree that was outside the pueblo, and he knocked it down entirely with two shots, at which the curaca and his Indians were amazed.

The governor told them that, as a proof of the love he had for them and in recompense for the good friendship and hospitality they had shown him, he wished to leave them that piece of which he thought a great deal, so that they might keep and guard it carefully until he should come back there or send to ask for it.

The cacique and all the principal Indians who were with him valued greatly the confidence he placed in them in leaving with them such an important object as a pledge. Thus having thanked him in the best terms that they could command (principally for the confidence and then for the piece of artillery), they ordered it to be guarded very carefully, and it may be believed that they have it still, regarding it with great veneration and esteem.

The army having rested five days, it left Cofa to go to another province named Cofaqui, which belonged to an elder brother of the cacique Cofa, richer and more powerful than he.¹⁵ The curaca Cofa went out with the Indians, both warriors and servants, to accompany the governor one day's journey, and he would have gone with him all the way that he had to travel through his territory, but the general would not consent to it, desiring that he return to his house and not go farther. Seeing the governor's wish, the cacique kissed his hands with much affection and regret at parting from him and said that he begged his lordship to remember the love and good will that he felt for him, to make use of it in his service; that he was his very affectionate servant. The governor thanked him with very friendly words and thus they took leave of one another.

The curaca was careful to take leave of the *maese de campo* and of the other captains and the officials of the imperial hacienda, to all of whom he spoke as if he had known them for a long time. As soon as he had taken leave of the Spaniards, he summoned his captains and told them to go with all the Indian warriors and servants whom he had brought with him to serve and entertain the governor and all his army, and that they were to consider themselves fortunate in that the Castilians had received them into their friendship and service. He also ordered that one of the principal Indians go on ahead and notify his brother Cofaqui of the Spaniards' coming to his country,

¹⁵See note 5.

saying that he begged him to receive them peaceably and serve them as he had done, because they deserved it. The general sent another message to the curaca Cofaqui along with this one from the cacique Cofa, offering him peace and friendship. Having made these arrangements, the cacique returned to his house, and the adelantado proceeded with his discovery. After six more days of marching he left the province of Cofa, a country, as we have said, fertile, abundant, and inhabited by a docile and industrious people, more so than any other that the Spaniards had seen up to that time.

IV

IT DEALS WITH THE CURACA COFAQUI, AND OF THE GREAT HOSPITALITY THAT HE SHOWED THE SPANIARDS IN HIS COUNTRY

As soon as the curaca Cofaqui received the messages from his brother and from the governor, he ordered everything necessary made ready, both the nobles for displaying the grandeur of his house, and provisions and servants for the use and entertainment of the Spaniards. Before the governor should enter it [the province], he sent four of the chief nobles accompanied by many people to offer him welcome and congratulations on his arrival, and the obedience due him, and to tell him how they were awaiting him in all peace and friendship with the desire to serve and entertain him to the best of their ability and power.

The general was pleased with this embassy, as were all his men, for they did not desire forced friendship but that which was freely given. So they marched until they reached the limits of Cofaqui where they gave permission to the Indians who had come with them from the province of Cofa, both warriors and servants, to return to their houses. Those of Cofaqui brought others to replace them in carrying the baggage.

The governor arrived at the first pueblo of Cofaqui, where the cacique was. Knowing from his lookouts that the general was approaching, he went to receive him outside the pueblo, accompanied by many nobles handsomely equipped with bows and arrows and great plumes, with rich mantles of marten-skins and various other small skins as finely dressed as the best ones from Germany. Many friendly words passed between the governor and the curaca and also between the principal Indians and the gentlemen and cap-

tains of the army, they making themselves understood partly by words and partly by signs, and thus they entered the pueblo amid great festivity and rejoicing on the part of the Indians. The cacique assigned quarters to the Spaniards personally, and he himself went with the governor's permission to another pueblo that was close by to which he had moved his household in order to make room in that one for the Spaniards' lodgings. Early in the morning of the next day he came to visit the governor and, after talking at length about things concerning that province, the Indian said: "Sir, I desire to know your lordship's will; whether it is to remain here where we wish to serve you, or to pass on, so that in accordance with it there may be provided in time that which is conducive to your service." The governor said that he was going in search of other provinces that they had told him were beyond, one of which was called Cofachiqui, and that he could not make an establishment or remain anywhere until he had seen and traversed them all.

The curaca replied that that province bordered upon his own and that there was a large uninhabited region between them that could be passed over in seven days' march. He offered his lordship the Indian warriors and servants necessary for the journey to serve and accompany him as far as his lordship wished to take them. He offered as well all the provisions needed for the journey, begging him to request and order prepared that which he desired to take as if he were in his own country. All of that land was at his command and very desirous to serve him.

The governor thanked him for the offer and said that—inasmuch as he, as an experienced captain and as lord of that land, knew the road he would have to take and the supplies that would be needed—he asked him to provide them as if for his own use, saying that the Spaniards needed nothing except food, and that, in leaving everything to his will and judgment, he would see that they desired to give him as little trouble as possible.

This confidence that the governor placed in the cacique obliged the latter to do more than he would have done if he had asked specifically for what he needed, and he [the cacique] said as much. He ordered at once that the provisions be carefully and quickly assembled, and also the Indian carriers who were to transport them. This order was obeyed and carried out so promptly that in four days, while the Spaniards were resting in the pueblo of Cofaqui, four thousand Indian servants were assembled to carry the food and clothing of the Christians, and another four thousand warriors to accompany and guide the army.

The chief provisions that the Castilians procured, wherever they might be, was maize, which throughout the Indies of the New World is what

wheat is in Spain. Along with the maize the Indians provided much dried fruit, which as we have told already the land produces by itself, without being cultivated, such as dried plums and raisins, two or three kinds of nuts, and acorns from the live oak and other oaks. There was no provision of meat because, as we have already said, they had no domesticated cattle, but only that which they killed while hunting in the woods.

Seeing such a gathering of people, though they were assembled to serve him, the governor and his men were cautious and kept watch night and day, more than ordinarily, so that the Indians, seeing them careful, would not dare attempt anything against them under cover of friendship. But the Indians themselves were heedless enough and had no thought of offending the Spaniards; rather with all their strength and will they busied themselves in serving and gratifying them, so that with their favor and protection they might avenge the injuries and damage that they had received from their enemies of Cofachiqui, as we shall soon see.

One day before the time appointed for the Spaniards' departure, the curaca being in the plaza of the pueblo with the general and other captains and principal gentlemen of the army, he ordered an Indian summoned whom he had named captain-general for all the affairs of war that might come up, and on the present occasion he was to go with the governor. When he appeared before him the curaca said to him: "You know well the war and perpetual enmity that our fathers and grandfathers and ancestors have always had and that we ourselves now have with the Indians of the province of Cofachiqui, where you are now going in the service of our governor and of these gentlemen; and also the many and notable offenses, evils and injuries that the natives of that country have continually committed and are now committing against us are well known. Therefore, since fortune offers us such a good opportunity as the present one to avenge ourselves, it will be a good thing to take advantage of it.

"As we have agreed, you, my captain-general, are to go in the company and in the service of the governor and of his invincible army, with whose favor and protection you are to do everything that you can think of against our enemies, in satisfaction for our injuries and wrongs. And because I know that there is no need to waste words in telling you what you must do, I confide in your spirit and good will, which I know will conform with my desires and with what is conducive to our honor in this case."

V

PATOF A PROMISES HIS CURACA TO TAKE VENGEANCE,
AND A STRANGE THING THAT HAPPENED TO
AN INDIAN GUIDE IS TOLD

The Indian *apu*, which in the language of El Perú signifies captain-general or he who is supreme in any office—whose own name was Patofa and who showed such nobility in his person and face that his appearance and aspect certified that the office of captain-general had been well bestowed upon him, and gave promise of all good conduct in peace and in war—rising to his feet and throwing off a mantle of cat-skins he wore like a cape, took a broadsword made of palm wood, which one of his servants carried behind him as a captain's insignia, and made many fine salutes with it before his cacique and governor, leaping from one side to the other with such dexterity and gracefulness and rhythm that a famous fencing-master could not have done better, so that our Spaniards wondered at it greatly. Having performed for a long time, he stopped, and with the broadsword in his hands went to his curaca and, making him a deep reverence after their custom, which differs little from ours, he said, according to the interpreters: "Our prince and lord, as your servant and the captain-general of your armies, I pledge my faith and word to your lordship to do in compliance with what you order me all that my strength and industry can accomplish, and I promise with the aid of these valiant Spaniards to avenge all the injuries, deaths, damages and losses that our ancestors and ourselves have received from the natives of Cofachiqui. And the vengeance will be such that with great satisfaction to your reputation and grandeur you can blot out from memory what now offends you therein, being unavenged. The surest sign that you can have of my having fulfilled that which you order me will be that, having done it satisfactorily, I shall dare to return to present myself before your honor. If fortune should run contrary to my hopes, your eyes will never see me again, nor will those of the Sun. I myself will inflict the punishment that my cowardice or my ill-luck may deserve, which will be death in case the enemy is unwilling to give it to me with his own hand." The curaca Cofaqui stood up and, embracing the general Patofa, said to him: "Your promises I consider as certain as if they were already fulfilled, and thus I reward them as services done, which I so desire to receive." So saying, he took off a cape of most handsome marten-skins that he wore and covered Patofa with it with his

own hands, in payment for services not yet rendered. The marten-skins in the cape were so fine that the Spaniards estimated that in Spain its value would be 2,000 ducats.

The favor of a lord giving to a servant the cape or plume or any other article of personal adornment, especially if he took it off in the servant's presence to present it, was among all the Indians of this great kingdom of La Florida a thing of such great honor and esteem that no other reward could equal it, and it seems reasonable that this should be so among all nations.

Everything now being provided for the Spaniards' march, a strange thing happened on the night before their departure, at which they wondered. This was that, as we mentioned above, our men captured in the province of Apalache two young Indians who had offered to guide the Castilians. One of them, whom the Christians named Marcos, without having baptized him, had now guided them over all the road that he knew. The other, whom they had named Pedro, also without baptizing him, was the one who was to guide them from there on as far as the province of Cofachiqui, where he had said they would find much gold and silver and many valuable pearls. This youth went about with the Spaniards as familiarly as if he had been born among them. It happened that about midnight of the night before the departure he shouted loudly for help, saying that they were killing him. The whole army was aroused, believing that it was some treason of the Indians, and thus they sounded the alarm and very quickly got under arms, the cavalry and infantry drawn up in squadrons. But as they heard no enemies, they went out to see where the alarm had come from, and they found that the Indian Pedro had caused it with his shouts. He was trembling with fear, terrified and half dead. Being asked what he had seen or heard that caused him to call for help with such extraordinary cries, he said that the devil, with a horrible visage and accompanied by many servants, had come to him and told him not to guide the Spaniards where he had promised to guide them or he would kill him. As he said these words, he [the devil] had hissed at him and dragged him through the room, giving him many blows all over the body, flogging and pounding him so that he was unable to move. According to the way the devil was mistreating him, he knew he would have ended by killing him if two Spaniards had not been able to come so quickly to his assistance. As the big devil saw them come through the door of his room he had left him immediately and fled, and all his servants had gone after him. He knew from this that the demons fear the Christians, and therefore he wished to be a Christian. He begged them for the love of God to baptize him at once so that the devil would not come back to kill him; being baptized like the other

Christians, it was certain that he would not touch him because he had seen him flee from them.

The Indian Pedro, the Christian convert, said all this before the governor and the other Spaniards who were present, who wondered at having heard him and saw that it was not pretense, because the marks of lashes, the bruises, and the swelling that they found on his face and all over his body were testimonies of the blows that they had given him. The general ordered the priests, clerics, and friars to be summoned and told them to do what they considered best after inquiring into the case. Having heard the Indian, they baptized him immediately and remained with him all that night and the following day, confirming him in the faith and restoring his body, which he said was beaten and buffeted by the blows that had been given him. Because of his indisposition, the camp did not move that day, but the next, and for two days they carried him on horseback because he could not stand up.

From what we have said about the Indian Pedro it can be seen how easily these Indians and all those of the New World can be converted to the Catholic faith, and as a native personally acquainted with those of El Perú, I dare affirm that the example of this Indian alone, with what he had seen, would suffice for the conversion of all those in his province and for their requesting baptism, as he did. But our people, who had the intention of preaching the gospel after having won and pacified the land, at that time did nothing more than what has been told.

The army left the pueblo of Cofaqui, and the curaca accompanied it for two leagues, and would have gone farther if the governor had not begged him to return to his house. On taking leave, he showed the regret of a friend at parting with the governor and the Spaniards, and having kissed the hands of the chief men among them, he again charged his captain-general Patofa to take care to serve the adelantado and all his army. He replied that his actions would show how much he had taken all his commands to heart. Thereupon the cacique returned to his house, and the Spaniards continued their march toward the province of Cofachiqui, so desired by them.

VI

THE GOVERNOR AND HIS ARMY ARE VERY CONFUSED AT SEEING THEMSELVES LOST IN A WILDERNESS WITHOUT FOOD

The army of the Christians marched with the cavalry and infantry formed in squadrons. The captain-general Patofa, who as we have said had four thousand select warriors, also marched separately with his squadron, with vanguard and rear guard, and the servants and carriers in between. In this manner marched the two nations, so different from one another, though not in military organization, because it was a very fine thing to see the good order and arrangement that each of them maintained, competing with one another. The Indians were not willing to admit that the Spaniards had the advantage in anything pertaining to the art and science of war.

They also camped separately at night, for as soon as the four thousand Indian carriers delivered the provisions to our men they went to sleep with their own. The Indians as well as the Spaniards posted their sentries and kept watch and guard over one another as if they were declared enemies. The Christians in particular did this, because on seeing such order and regularity on the part of the heathen, they were cautious with regard to them, but the Indians proceeded openly enough and entirely without malice; on the other hand they showed their desire to please the Spaniards in everything. Their posting sentries and standing guard, and the other regulations that they observed, were done more to show themselves to be warriors than from suspicion of the Spaniards. They proceeded with this vigilance and care all the time that they were together. By the way that they were going, which proved to be the narrowest point of the province of Cofaqui, they left it in two daily journeys, and on the second night they slept at the beginning of the large uninhabited region that lies between the two provinces of Cofaqui and Cofachiqui.

They marched another six days through the deserted country and saw that the land was all pleasant, and the mountains and woods they found were not rough or dense, but they could pass through them easily. During these six days, among other smaller streams they crossed two large and swift rivers carrying much water, but because it was spread over a wide area they were able to ford them, making use of the horses with which they formed a wall from one side of the river to the other so that it would break the fury of the



On the Trail. This painting shows a portion of De Soto's entrada on the march. It was painted by Dan Feaser, National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Interpretive Design Center, and was commissioned by the National Park Service. The original 4' x 8' oil on wood mural completed in 1969 is on display at the visitors center, De Soto National Memorial, Bradenton, Florida. It is said to be the only piece of artwork in the United States that accurately portrays the arms and armor used by the De Soto expedition. The expedition generally followed Indian trails from one town to the next. (Courtesy of the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service)

water. It was so rapid that the infantrymen, on going into it waist-deep, could not stand up; but with the help of the horses, by taking hold of them, all those on foot crossed without danger, Indians and Spaniards alike.

In the midst of the seventh day's march Indians and Spaniards found themselves in great confusion, because the road that they had been following up to that time, which appeared to be a very wide public highway, came to an end, and many narrow paths that led through the woods in every direction were lost after they had followed them for a short distance, and they were without a path. Thus after making many efforts, they found themselves closed up in that wilderness without knowing how to get out of it, and the woods were different from the former ones because they were taller and denser, and they could travel through them only with difficulty.

The Indians whom the governor brought with him as domestics, as well as those who came with the general Patofa, were lost, there not being among them all a single one who knew the road or could say what direction they must take in order to get out of that forest and wilderness more quickly. The governor summoned Captain Patofa and asked him why he had led them into those deserts under pretense of friendship, where no road could be found anywhere by which to get out of them, and how it was possible or believable that there was not one among the eight thousand Indians whom he brought with him who would know where they were or how they could get to the province of Cofachiqui, even though it meant cutting a way through the forest by hand. He said that it was not credible that, having had perpetual warfare with one another, they would not know the public and secret roads that passed from one province to the other.

Captain Patofa replied that neither he nor any of his Indians had ever been where they were at present and that the wars these two provinces had waged had never been in open battle between two forces, one taking an army to the territory of the other, but only at the fisheries on those two rivers and the other streams that they had left behind them and at the hunting grounds, between the parties that both sent out through those woods and uninhabited districts that they had passed. Meeting at these hunting grounds and fisheries, they killed and captured one another as enemies, and because those of Cofachiqui had been superior to his and had always gained many advantages over them in the fights that they had thus had, his Indians were intimidated and submissive, not daring to go any distance or leave their own boundaries. This was why they did not know where they were or how they could get out of that wilderness; and if his lordship suspected that he had led them into those deserts with cunning and deceit so that he might perish there with his

army, he could undeceive himself, because neither his lord Cofaqui nor he, who prided themselves on being truthful men, having received them as friends, would have imagined, much less done, such a thing. In order to prove that what he said was true, he [the governor] might take any hostages that he wished, and if his own head was enough to satisfy him, he was very willing to give himself up immediately so that he could order it cut off, and not only his own but also those of all the Indians who came with him. They were all at his orders and disposal both because of the law of war, since he was their captain-general, and by the particular order his curaca and lord had given them, saying that they were to obey him in everything, even to the death.

Hearing the honest words of Patofa and seeing the passionate earnestness with which he was saying them, the governor told him, to prevent him from doing some desperate act, that he believed him and was satisfied of his friendship. He at once called the Indian Pedro, whom we said the devil had mistreated in Cofaqui. He had guided the Spaniards from the province of Apalache until that day with such thorough knowledge of the country that the night before he could tell everything they would find on the road on the following day. Like the rest of the Indians, this youth also lost the skill that he had shown up to that time and said that, as it had been four or five years since he had stopped going by way of that road, he had forgotten it in such manner that he found himself totally lost. He neither knew the road nor was he able to say definitely how they could get out to the province of Cofachiqui. Many of the Spaniards, seeing him silent and uncertain about the road, said that from fear of the devil who had mistreated and threatened him he was unwilling to guide them or to say how they must go to get out of that wilderness.

In this confusion and not knowing how to get out, our Spaniards traveled the rest of that day without any road, simply going where they found the forest more open and clear. Going on thus, lost, at sunset they reached a great river, larger than the two that they had crossed, which could not be forded on account of the large volume of water. The sight of it caused them even greater dismay because they had neither rafts nor canoes in which to cross it nor food to eat while they made them. This was what concerned them most, because the provisions that they had brought from Cofaqui had been apportioned for seven days, which they had said would be spent in passing through the uninhabited region, and although they had brought four thousand Indian carriers, their loads had been so light that they were not half of the usual ones, and an Indian can carry at most only half a *fanega* of

Indian corn or maize. Though they were thus laden, these Indians also carried their weapons like the rest who went as soldiers; for as all of them had left their country with the intention of revenging themselves on those of Cofachiqui, they went prepared with their arms. They carried them also in order not to return empty-handed through strange lands that belonged to the enemy. Therefore, because there were nearly ten thousand men and about 350 horses to eat maize, on the seventh day of their march they had nothing more to eat. And though on the day before an order had been issued to conserve the food and use it sparingly for fear that they would not find their way at once, it was already too late, for there was now no more to conserve. Thus our Spaniards found themselves without a guide, without a road, and without provisions, lost in a wilderness, cut off in front by a large river and behind by the extensive uninhabited region that they had passed through, and on all sides was the confusion of not knowing when or how they could get out of those brambles. Above all else was the lack of food, which was what caused the most uneasiness.

VII

FOUR CAPTAINS GO TO EXPLORE THE COUNTRY, AND A STRANGE PUNISHMENT THAT PATOFA IMPOSED UPON AN INDIAN

The governor having considered the difficulties and troubles in which his army found itself, it seemed to him best and even necessary for the camp not to move until a road had been found and a way out of that wilderness. Thus at dawn of the following day he ordered that four parties go out, two of cavalry and two of infantry. Two were to go upstream and the other two down, with orders and directions that two of them were to follow the river-bank without leaving it, and the other two were to follow the same route one league inland, to see whether by one way or the other they could come upon some road or discover inhabited country. He ordered each one of the captains to return within four or five days with [a report of] what he had found. These captains were the accountant Juan de Añasco, Andrés de Vasconcelos, Juan de Guzmán and Arias Tinoco.

General Patofa went with Captain Juan de Añasco, not wishing to remain in the camp, and they happened to be the ones who went along the river-

bank, upstream. With them went the Indian Pedro, who was disgruntled at having lost his way, and it seemed to him that by going on that expedition he would succeed in his undertaking and put the Spaniards into the province of Cofachiqui, as he had promised to do. A thousand Indian warriors went with each one of the Spanish companies so that they could scatter through the woods and search for a road.

The governor stayed on the riverbank waiting for the news that his men should bring, and there he and his people suffered extreme scarcity of food, for they ate only the tendrils of wild vines that grew in the woods and along the streams. The four thousand Indian servants who remained with the governor went out early in the morning to hunt for food in the fields, and at night they came back with edible herbs and roots and with some birds and small animals that they had killed with their bows. Others brought fish they had caught, and they left nothing undone that they could possibly do to find food. All that they thus found they took without touching it or concealing any part of it to the Spaniards to whose company they were assigned, and such was the Indians' fidelity and respect toward them in this regard that although they were perishing of hunger they would not take anything until they had presented it to the Spaniards. The latter, overcome by such kindness, gave the Indians the greater part of what they thus brought, but all of it was nothing for so many people.

After being three days in that camp, the governor, seeing that such hunger could not be endured—and certainly its pangs could not be exaggerated—ordered that some of the swine they were bringing for breeding should be killed, and eight ounces of the meat given for the subsistence of each Spaniard, a succor that rather increased hunger than allayed it. The Spaniards also divided the meat with their Indians so that they might see that they did not wish to take advantage of them in any way, but to suffer their hardships along with them.

It was a source of extreme satisfaction to the soldiers to see the fine attitude the general showed toward his men in this affliction, to encourage them and help them endure their hunger, for he enjoyed no advantages of any kind, [acting] as if he were the least among them all. The soldiers conducted themselves in the same way toward their captain, concealing their pangs of hunger in order to mitigate the grief that he felt in the capacity of a good father at seeing his men in such want, and pretending that this was less than it really was. They showed in their faces the happiness and contentment of men who were enjoying all abundance and prosperity.

We neglected to tell above, in its place, of an exemplary punishment that

Patofa imposed upon one of his Indians. Because it is so strange, it ought not to be forgotten, and it will fit in well enough wherever it is included. Thus it was that, on the fifth day of their march through the uninhabited region, one of the Indian carriers (whom they called *tameme* in the language of the island of Española), without having received any injury, and impelled by cowardice or the desire to see his wife and children, or because the devil had told him about the hunger that they were going to suffer, or for some other reason that he alone knew, decided to run away. The Spaniard in whose charge he was missed him, and told General Patofa about it. The latter ordered four young Indian nobles to go back for that Indian as quickly as possible and not to stop until they overtook him and brought him back handcuffed. The Indians went so swiftly that in a short time they overtook him and came back to the camp, bringing him before their captain.

After censuring him in the presence of the soldiers for his cowardice and pusillanimity, his disrespect for his prince and curaca, his disobedience to his captain-general, and the treason and perfidy that he had shown toward his companions and his whole nation, the captain said to him: "Your crime and wrongdoing shall not go unpunished, so that others may not take a bad example from you." So saying, he ordered that they take him to a small stream that flowed near the camp, and in Patofa's presence they took off the few clothes that he was wearing, leaving only the trousers. Then at the captain's orders they brought a number of shoots from trees more than a fathom long, and he said to the Indian: "Lie down on your chest at this stream and drink all this water, and do not stop until you have drunk it up." He ordered four of the young men that whenever he raised his head from the water they were to beat him with the shoots until he drank again, and they were to stir up the water so it would be harder for him to drink. Put to this torture, the Indian drank until he could drink no more, but when he stopped they gave him cruel strokes with the shoots from head to foot, and they did not cease until he began to drink again. Seeing such a severe punishment and knowing that it would not stop short of killing him, some of his relatives went running to the governor and, throwing themselves at his feet, they begged him to take pity on their poor kinsman. The general sent a message to Captain Patofa asking that he please stop this punishment, though it was so justified, and not allow his anger to go further. Thereupon they left the Indian alone, now half dead, having drunk so much water without being thirsty.